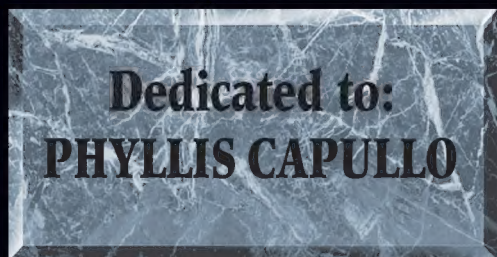


SPAWN



image® **COMICS PRESENTS:**

"NOEL"



story

TODD McFARLANE

pencils

GREG CAPULLO

inks

TODD McFARLANE

letters

TOM ORZECOWSKI

color

STEVE OLIFF

QUINN SUPPLEE

and **OLYOPTICS**

a special thanks to

KEVIN CONRAD

JULIA SIMMONS

JEREMIE JOHNSON

Spawn #39 Prelude:

For the first time in his existence, Spawn feels he has no purpose. He is spinning aimlessly, not knowing where to stop. The once clear target has disappeared. The mysterious hobo Cogliostro, made Spawn see that Jason Wynn was just a small pawn in a very large game. Until the true enemy is revealed, unknown random victims will fill the emptiness.

FOR IMAGE COMICS
LARRY MARDER - exec. director

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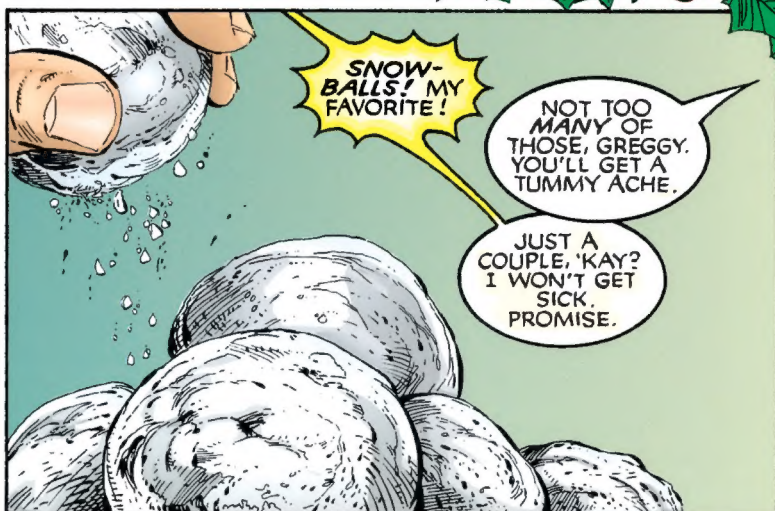


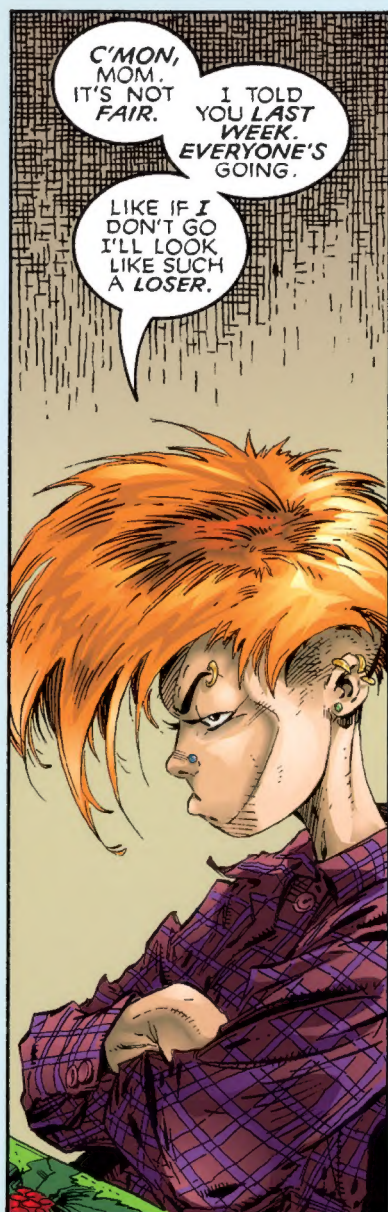
CHRISTMAS EVE,
HARLEM, NEW YORK.

A SNOW
STORM
ENGULFS
THE CITY,
AND
CONCEALS
ITS GRIMY
STREETS.

THE FAINT
SOUNDS
OF
CHRISTMAS
MUSIC,
SIRENS,
AND THE
ODD GUN
SHOT
MINGLE IN
THE NIGHT
AIR.

ROWS OF BUILDINGS
HOUSE FAMILIES...
SOME EXTENDED,
SOME BROKEN.
THE LUCKY ONES
PREPARE FOR THE
EVENING'S FESTIVITIES.





C'MON, MOM. IT'S NOT FAIR.

I TOLD YOU LAST WEEK. EVERYONE'S GOING.

LIKE IF I DON'T GO I'LL LOOK LIKE SUCH A LOSER.



I'M SORRY, NADINE. I HAVE TO WORK, AND YOU KNOW WE CAN'T AFFORD A BABYSITTER. I NEED YOU TO STAY WITH GREGGY.



THIS IS SO TOTALLY UNFAIR.

NADINE, PLEASE. I DON'T NEED THIS RIGHT NOW.

'BIBSY BOY,' COME GIVE MOMMA A KISS GOOD-NIGHT.



MY SILLY BOY. YOU LOOK LIKE SANTA WITH THAT POWDERED SUGAR BEARD. MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN BED EARLY TONIGHT, YOU DON'T WANT SANTA SKIPPING OUR HOUSE BECAUSE SOMEONE'S NOT SLEEPING.



I HATE THIS.
LEAVING THEM
ALONE TONIGHT.
ESPECIALLY
GREGGY.

I WISH
WAITRESS-
ING COULD
MAKE ENDS
MEET, BUT I
NEED **THIS**
JOB TOO. THE
KIDS DESERVE
A BETTER
LIFE THAN
I'VE HAD.

OH, GOD.
I'M GONNA
BE LATE.



WELL,
PHYLLIS. I'M
GLAD YOU
DECIDED TO
SHOW UP. I'M
NOT SO SURE YOU
NEED THIS JOB
AS MUCH AS
YOU SAY.
DO YOU?

I DO,
MRS. WHITE.
I'M SORRY.
IT WON'T
HAPPEN
AGAIN.

THE
WEATHER.
IT'S JUST
AWFUL...

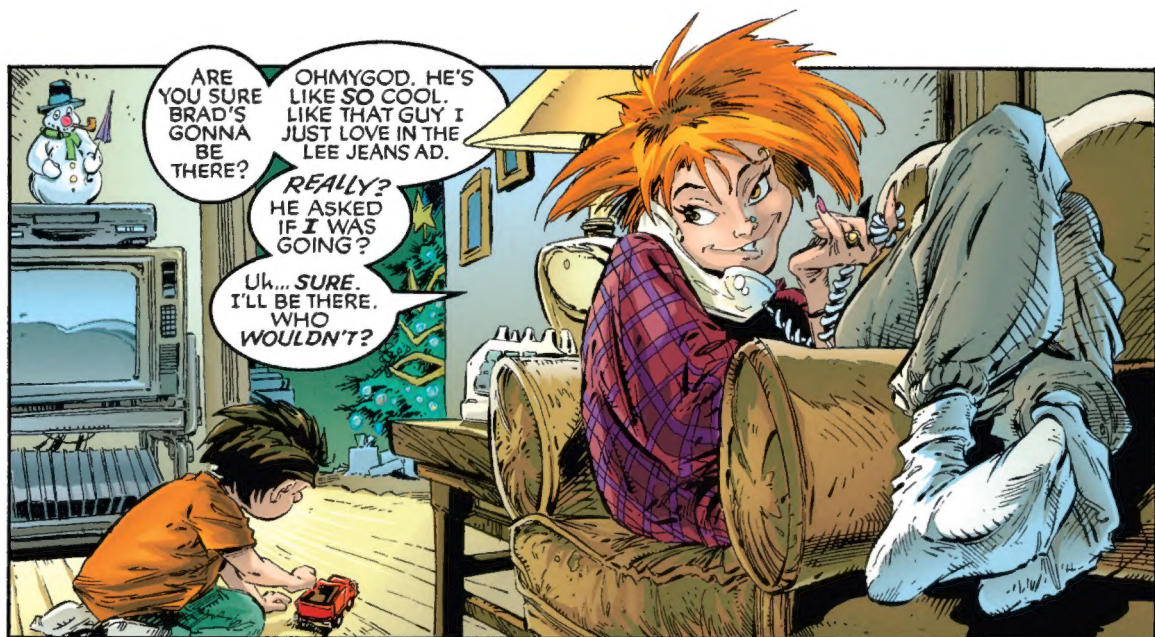
QUIET...



DON'T
GIVE ME
EXCUSES.

IF YOU'RE
TOO LAZY TO
WORK, I'LL FIND
SOMEONE **ELSE**.
HUNDREDS OF
PEOPLE LIKE YOU
WOULD **BEG**
ME FOR THIS
JOB.

YOU
SHOULD
SHOW ME
MORE
RESPECT.

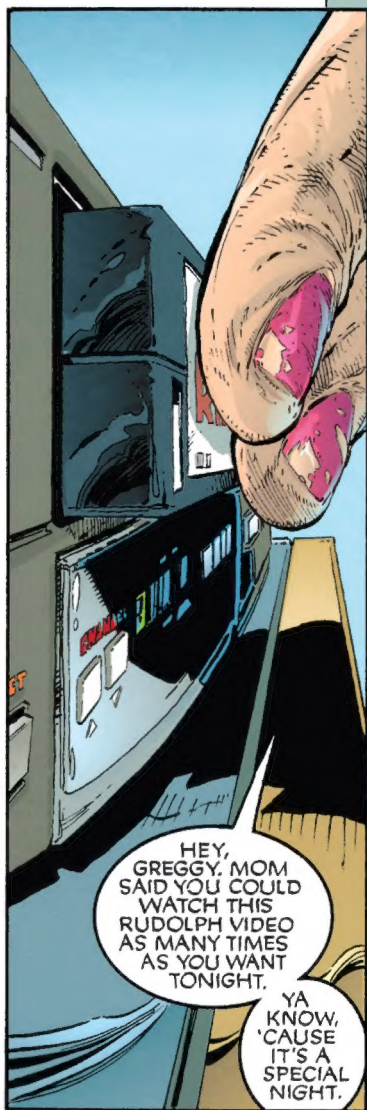


ARE YOU SURE BRAD'S GONNA BE THERE?

OHMYGOD, HE'S LIKE SO COOL. LIKE THAT GUY I JUST LOVE IN THE LEE JEANS AD.

REALLY? HE ASKED IF I WAS GOING?

Uh... SURE. I'LL BE THERE. WHO WOULDN'T?



HEY, GREGGY. MOM SAID YOU COULD WATCH THIS RUDOLPH VIDEO AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT TONIGHT.

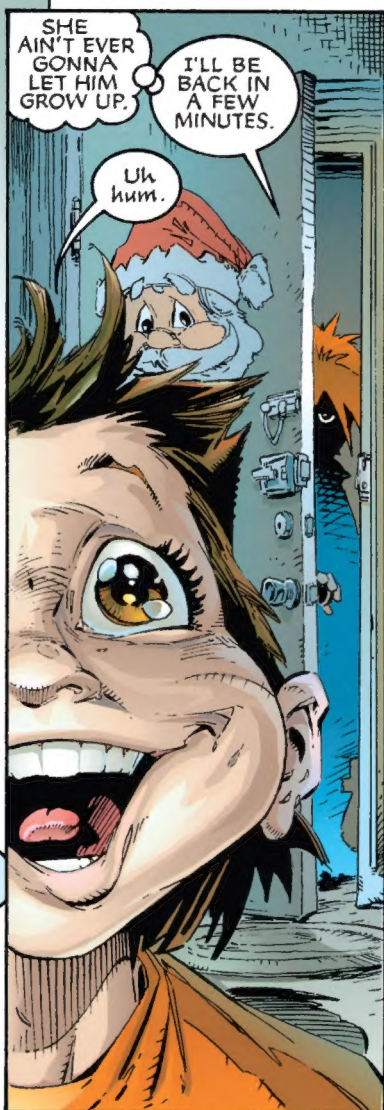
YA KNOW, 'CAUSE IT'S A SPECIAL NIGHT.



REMEMBER, IT'LL REWIND BY ITSELF. YOU JUST PRESS PLAY. OKAY, 'BIBSY'?

I HATE WHEN MOM CALLS HIM THAT. HE'S ALMOST 5. JUST 'CAUSE HE'S A PIG AT THE TABLE DOESN'T MEAN HE STILL NEEDS A BIB.

WOW! ISN'T MOM THE GREATEST?



SHE AIN'T EVER GONNA LET HIM GROW UP.

I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW MINUTES.

Uh hum.



WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? THE FOG IS TOO THICK FOR ME TO DELIVER THESE PRESENTS. ALL THE BOYS AND GIRLS WILL BE SO SAD.

I GUESS THERE'LL BE NO CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR.

YES THERE WILL, SANTA! ASK RUDOLPH.



RUDOLPH, YOUR NOSE IS SO BRIGHT. IT'S BLINDING.

Oh, RUDOLPH! YOUR NOSE I HAVE A GREAT IDEA.

ASK HIM! ASK HIM!

YOUR BRIGHT NOSE WILL LIGHT OUR WAY. CHRISTMAS WILL BE SAVED.

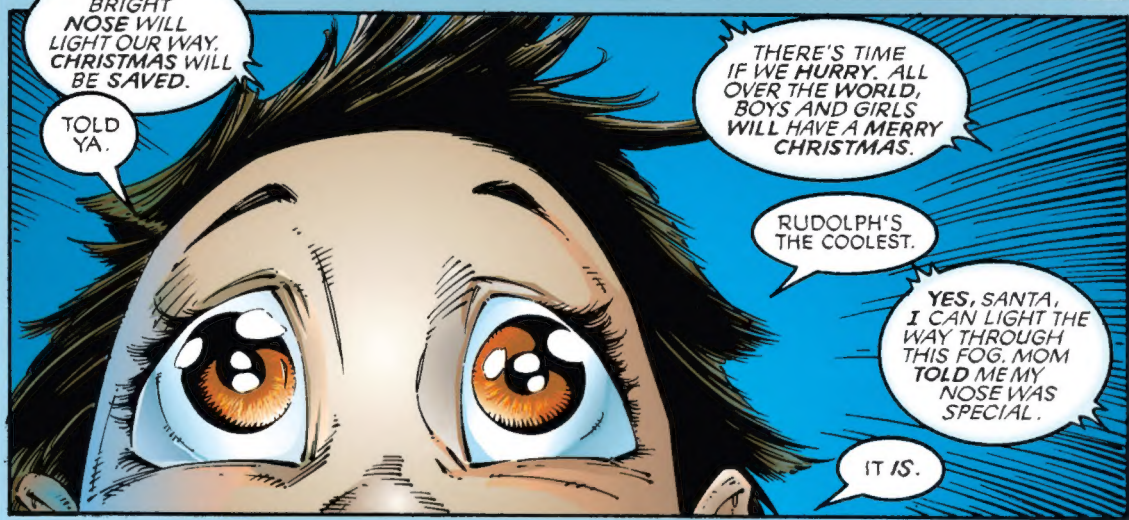
TOLD YA.

THERE'S TIME IF WE HURRY. ALL OVER THE WORLD, BOYS AND GIRLS WILL HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

RUDOLPH'S THE COOLEST.

YES, SANTA, I CAN LIGHT THE WAY THROUGH THIS FOG. MOM TOLD ME MY NOSE WAS SPECIAL.

IT IS.

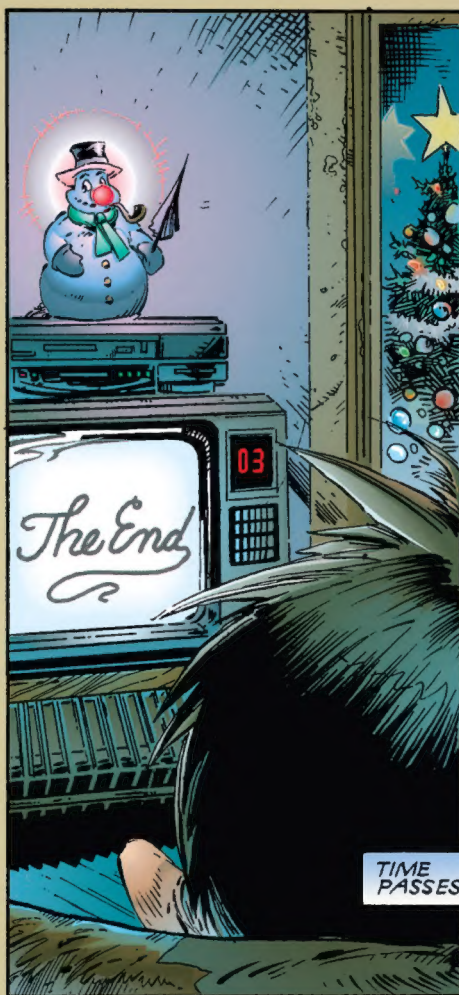


WITH HIS MOTHER WORKING
ALMOST EVERY NIGHT, HE THINKS
NOTHING OF BEING LEFT ALONE
WITH NADINE.

AS FOR THE MANY NIGHTS
SHE TAKES OFF, HE THINKS
NOTHING OF BEING LEFT
ALONE, PERIOD.

READY TO
GO, RUDOLPH?
YOU WILL LEAD
THE SLEIGH
TONIGHT.

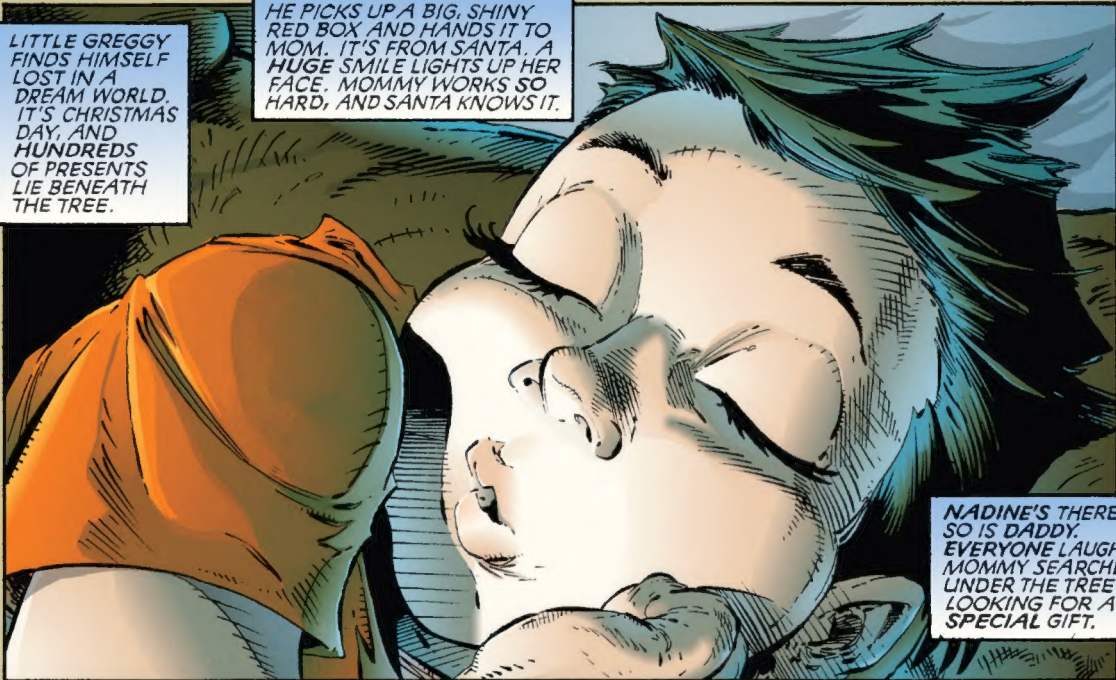
YEAH!
RUDOLPH!



TIME
PASSES.

LITTLE GREGGY
FINDS HIMSELF
LOST IN A
DREAM WORLD.
IT'S CHRISTMAS
DAY, AND
HUNDREDS
OF PRESENTS
LIE BENEATH
THE TREE.

HE PICKS UP A BIG, SHINY
RED BOX AND HANDS IT TO
MOM. IT'S FROM SANTA. A
HUGE SMILE LIGHTS UP HER
FACE. MOMMY WORKS SO
HARD, AND SANTA KNOWS IT.



NADINE'S THERE.
SO IS DADDY.
EVERYONE LAUGHS.
MOMMY SEARCHES
UNDER THE TREE.
LOOKING FOR A
SPECIAL GIFT.

NOW, IT'S
GREGGY'S
TURN.

A FUNNY
LOOKING
PRESENT
WITH A
HUGE BOW
ON IT.

A NEW
GUITAR.

JUST WHAT
HE ALWAYS
WANTED.

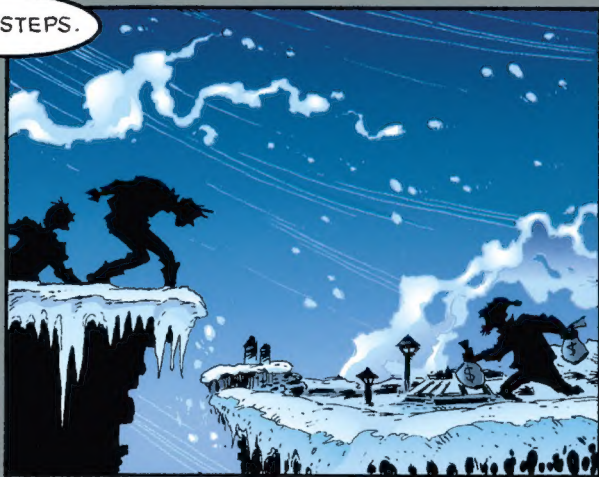
THE BEST
CHRISTMAS
EVER.

BZZT!



IS
THAT
YOU?

Unh? FOOTSTEPS.



LOTS
OF
THEM!

OH!

MAYBE...

YES!

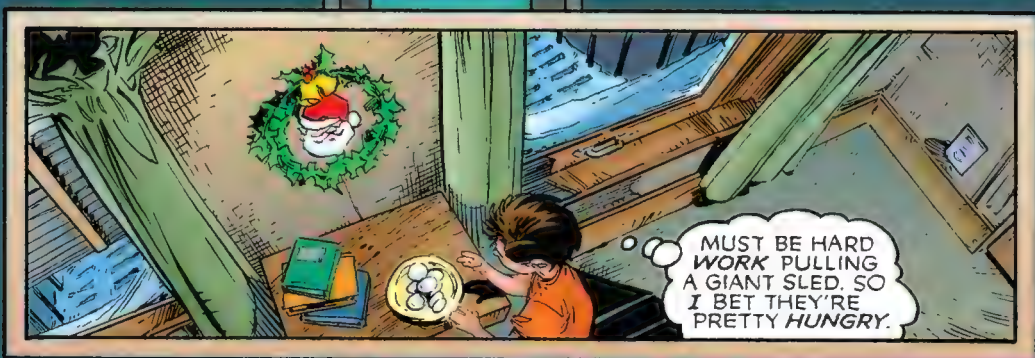
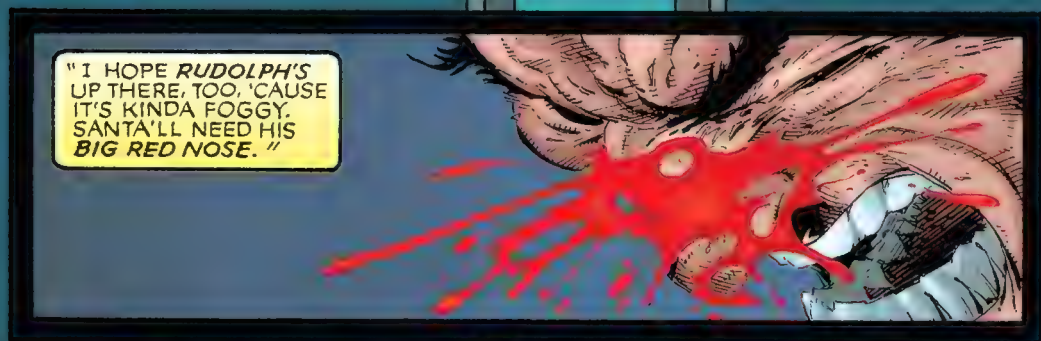
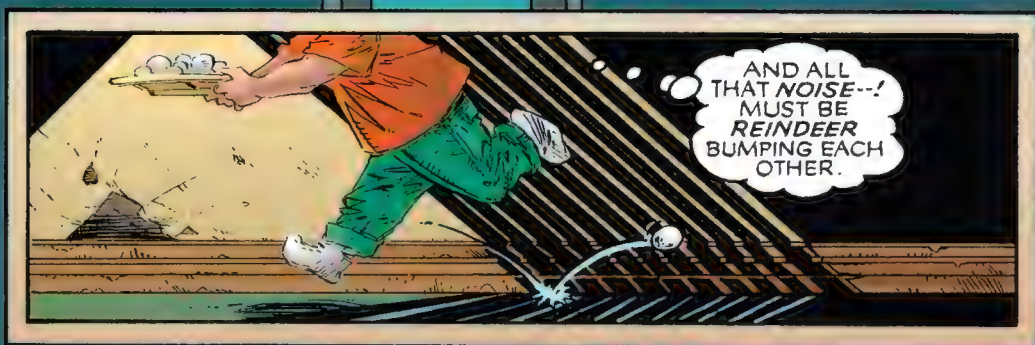
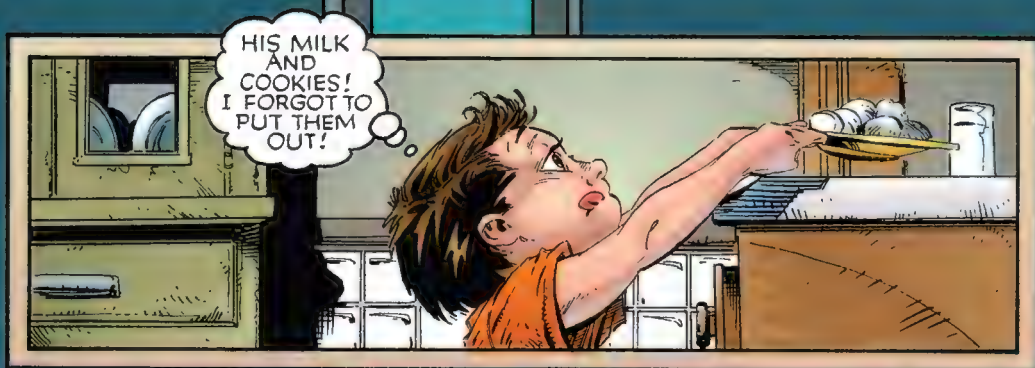
IT'S
THEM!
THE LITTLE
HELPERS!

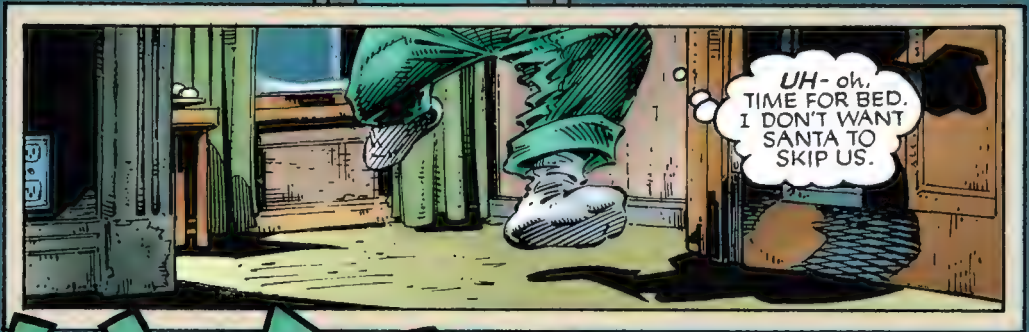
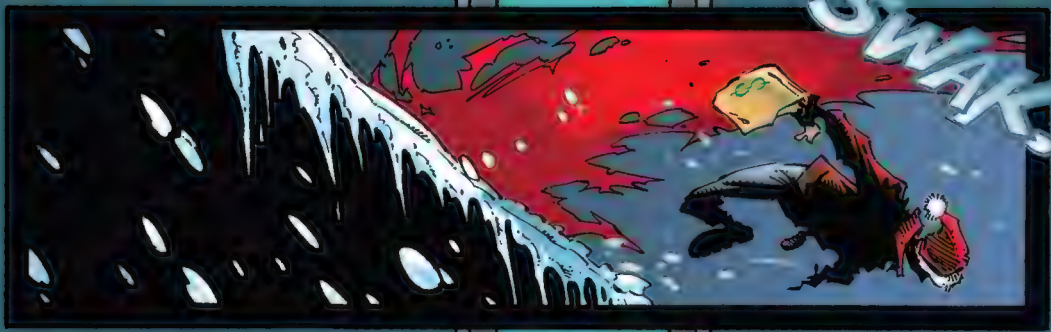
THAT
MEANS...

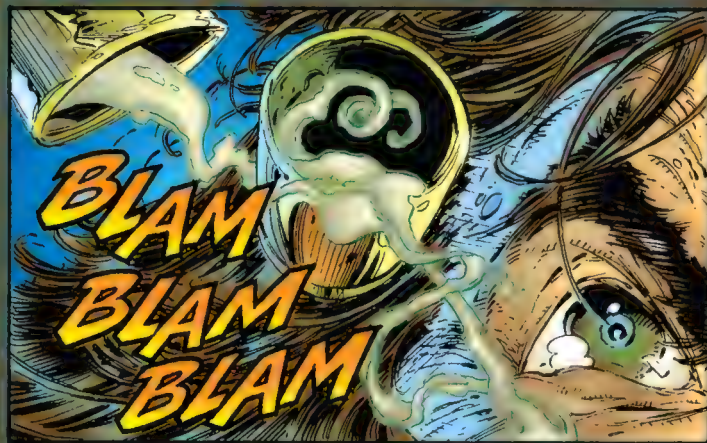
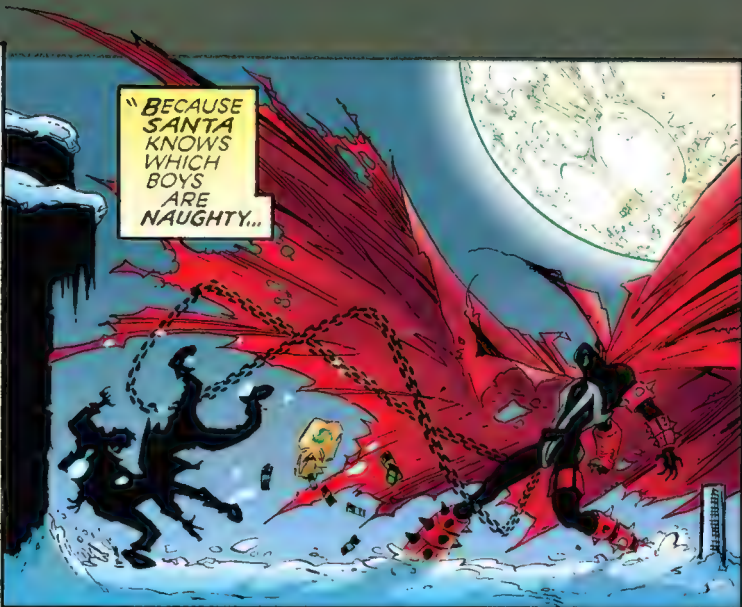


...**SANTA'S**
HERE!





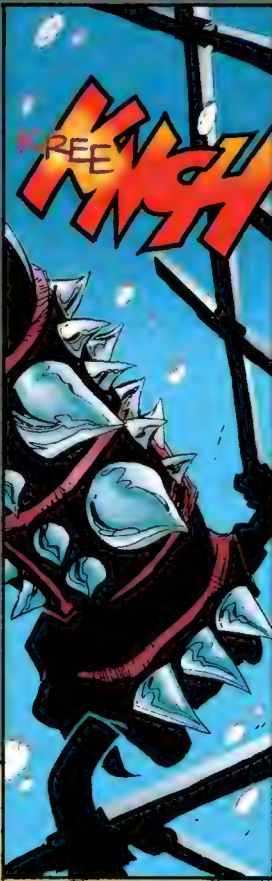




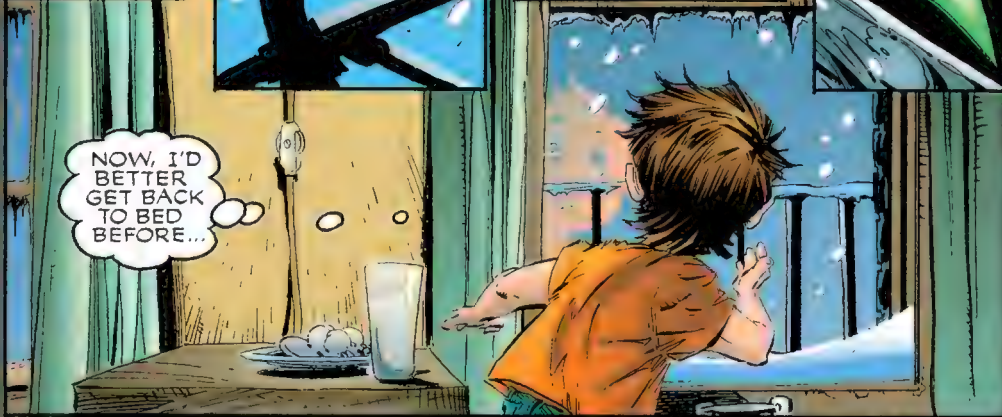
"HOPE HE KNOWS MOMMY'S BEEN NICE, TOO. EVEN NADINE. BUT SHE'S NAUGHTY SOMETIMES, LIKE THAT ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN. HE'S ALWAYS..."

"OH NO!"

I LEFT THE MILK IN THE KITCHEN!!



NOW, I'D BETTER GET BACK TO BED BEFORE...



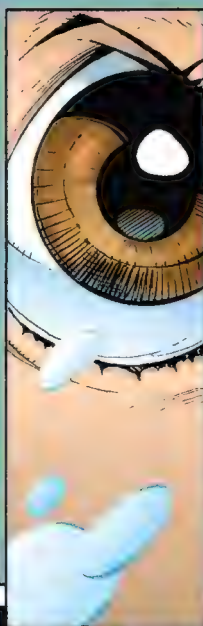
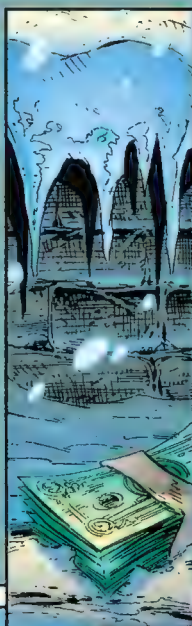
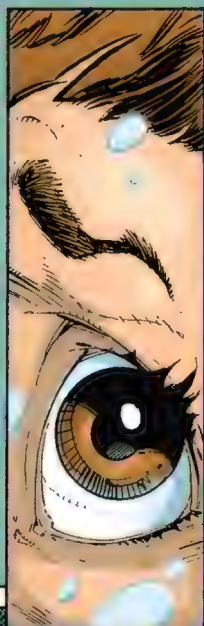


Wow!

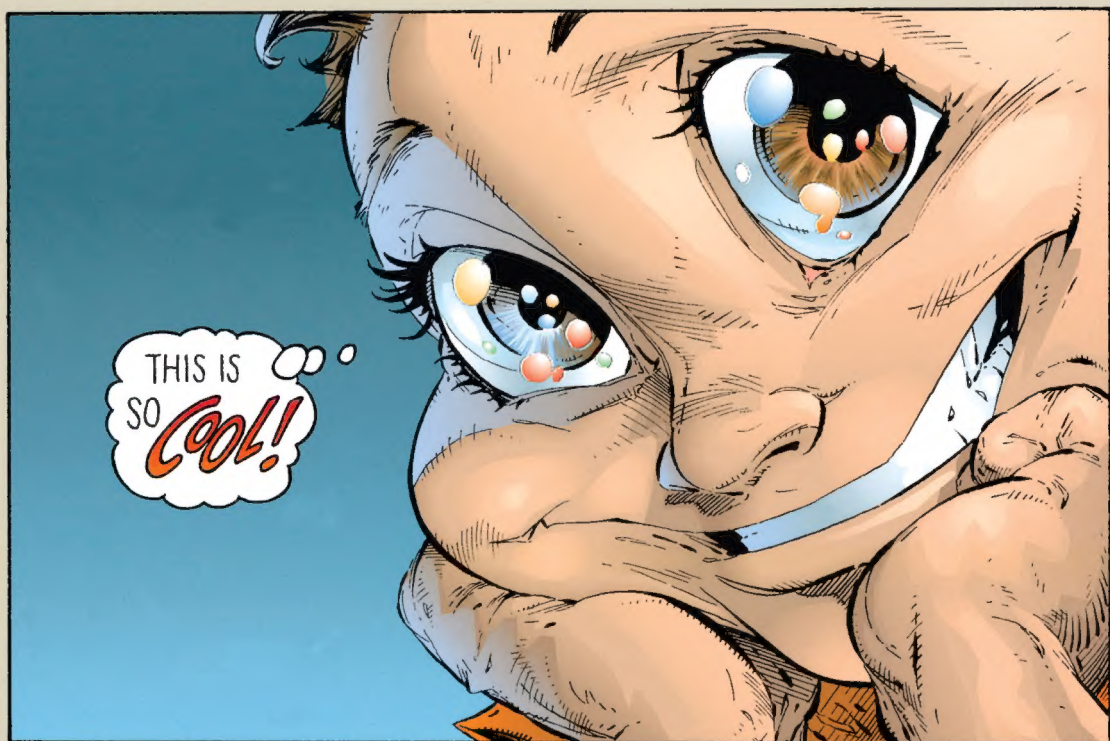


HAVING COUNTED THE GIFTS
A DOZEN TIMES A DAY FOR
THE PAST WEEK, GREGGY CAN
SEE AT ONCE THAT NOTHING
HAS BEEN DISTURBED.









THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN PHYLLIS OPENS HER UNEXPECTED FINAL PRESENT, SHE SEES HER SON BEAMING WITH PRIDE. THEN, AS SHE AND NADINE STARE IN SHOCK AT ITS CONTENTS, GREGGY TELLS THEM OF THE LATE-NIGHT VISIT.

HE RADIATES INNOCENCE AND SINCERITY. FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, PHYLLIS WRESTLES WITH HER CONSCIENCE. FINALLY, SHE COMES TO TERMS WITH HER DILEMMA.

THOUGH SHE KNOWS SHE SHOULDN'T, SHE KEEPS THE MONEY, DEDICATING IT TO A GREATER PURPOSE.



TO PHYLLIS! THE GREATEST NEIGHBOR AND FRIEND A PERSON COULD HOPE FOR.

WITHIN TWO DAYS, ALL THE MONEY IS SPENT ON THE OTHER POOR FAMILIES IN HER BUILDING. A WONDERFUL DINNER, TOYS FOR EVERY CHILD. IT'S A PARTY NONE WILL SOON FORGET.

'BIBSY.'

YES, MOMMA.

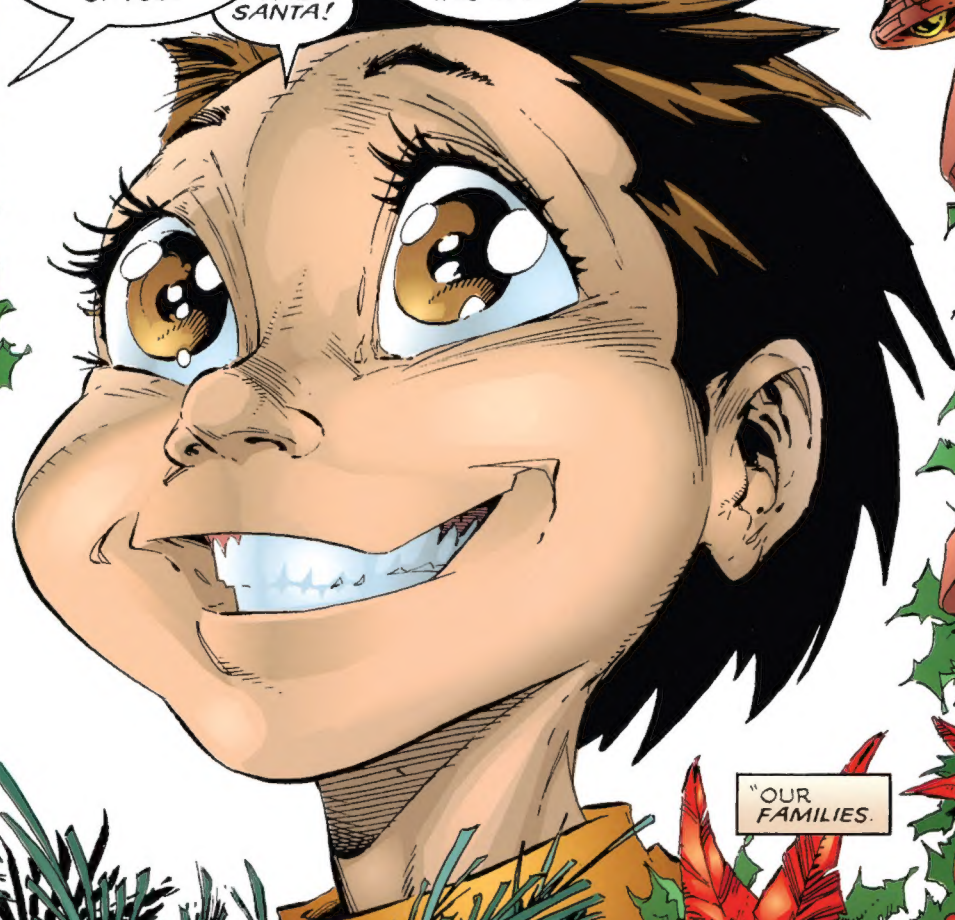
YES, MOMMA.

I'M SO PROUD OF YOU. DO YOU KNOW THAT?

I WANT YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR, PLEASE. REMEMBER THIS. REMEMBER TODAY. ALL THE JOY IN THIS ROOM IS BECAUSE OF YOU.

AND SANTA!

HIM, TOO. YOU SEE, WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS GIVE ME A CHANCE TO REMIND US ALL OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT IN THIS LIFE.



"OUR FAMILIES."

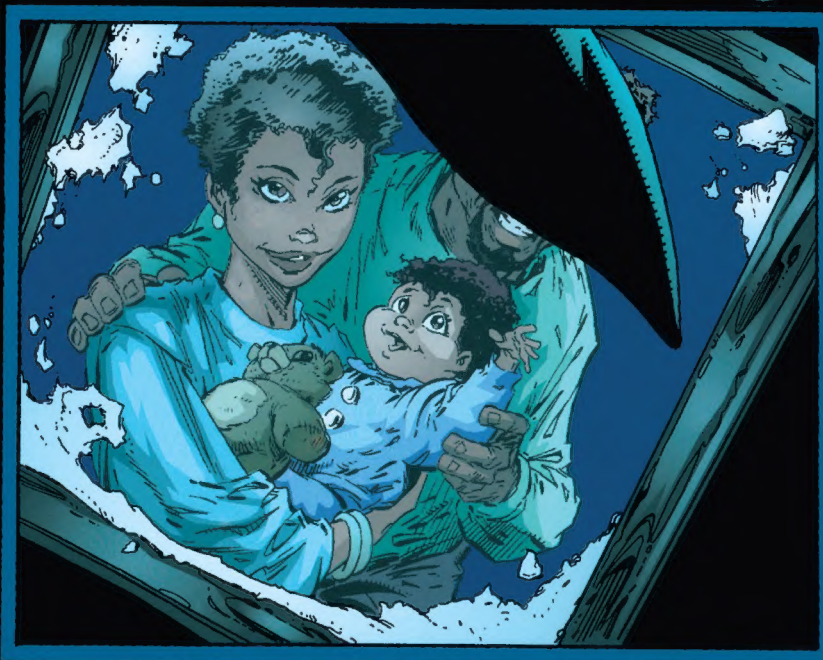
"OUR FRIENDS."

"PLEASE, NEVER FORGET THOSE YOU CARE FOR."





"ALWAYS FIND
TIME TO BE
WITH THEM."



"AND NEVER, *EVER*
DESERT THEM IN A
TIME OF NEED.
THAT'S HOW YOU
SHOW YOU *CARE*.
HOW PEOPLE KNOW
YOU *LOVE* THEM."

"I'LL REMEMBER."

"MOMMY?"

"YES, GREGGY?"

"ISN'T THIS THE
BEST CHRISTMAS
EVER?"

"YES IT IS, SON.
YES IT *IS*."





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE